STONE WALLS

Spring 1980



I once read a remark by Margaret Mitchell that was worth holding onto. Someone asked her what she had been "doing" lately and she replied, "Doing? It's a full-time job being the author of *Gone With The Wind*. Now, how many times have you felt like that, simply living in our hilltowns? You don't have to "do" anything. In fact, what is regularly called "making a living" often gets pushed to the side, giving favor to the immediacy and variety of living itself.

"Immediacy of living"... that has to do with those little, enduring, gnawing demands: the demands of an aging house; the demands of tomato vines which have outdone themselves in production; the demands of wood stoves (our personal rebellion against dependency). All these demands, annoying as they are, help to keep us fully aware of that thing which scientists call "symbiosis: we must constantly care for those things which care for us."

I have been living in Hadley, away from the hills, for the past couple of years. I have missed life in the hills. I feel that I have lost contact with the gnawing demands of independent living. What I have missed is not only the constant awareness of the need to care for what is ours, but also the gratifying satisfaction that comes with the completion of visible, physical tasks.

Ellie Fazarus

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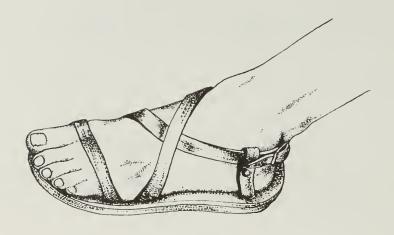
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The Craftsman in Leather



and an Interview with John Milligan

by Sharon Dorman of Westfield

The first worker in leather would be one found in a cave, stooping over a carcass of some wild beast, scraping its hide, letting it dry in the sun, and eventually wrapping it around himself as a means of protection from the elements. Then, no one knows how far back in the distant past it may have been, men took to rubbing the newly stripped hide with the natural fat of the beast to which it belonged. After it was dried and smoothed, the hide lasted much longer and was much nicer to look at.

The lake-dwellers of the late Stone Age stretched skins over hollow pieces of wood in order to make drums. Earlier, forms of boats were fashioned of leather as were some boats' sails. One of the first animals man tamed, the horse, necessitated the making of the leather harness and the whip made of hide. The people who harnessed, drove, and rode the horses wore not only garments but footgear of leather.

The ancient Egyptians understood the method of curing leather with fat and heat at a very remote period. They would also dye the leather and emboss it with beautiful designs. In the land of the Pharaohs, sandals, seats for chairs, bow cases, harnesses, shields, water bottles, straps for fastening mummy wrappings, girdles, and thongs all fashioned of leather made this craftsman an important member of the community. These workmen could be found cutting leather or smoothing it or shaping it into the soles of sandals, piercing it with awls, polishing it with stones, or stitching it to a wooden form.

A simple Egyptian sandal was made of papyrus reeds attached with leather thongs, but more elegant sandals and gorgeous slippers were often seen on the feet of the very wealthy. The leather was stained with rich colors, and thongs were clasped with buckles of gold.

Eventually civilized people replaced their rough sandals with elegant and beautiful slippers, the colored leather shoes with the peaked and upturned toes, and developed the top-boot of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe. The Assyrians wore high boots laced up the front and slippers with stiff soles and leather heel coverings leaving the instep and toes bare. The warlike

Hittites in the Old Testament wore stout leather boots with curled-up toes and very thick soles.

The leather worker had much to do besides making sandals. Among his tasks was the preparation of vellum and parchment for the scribe as well as the fashioning of gloves. (A beautifully made pair of gloves was found in the tomb of Tutankhamen.)

As years passed, the leather workers split up into a number of different branches. These were: skinners, tanners, leather-sellers, whittawers (makes of light-colored leather), saddlers, makers of bridles and bits, glovers, girdlers, pouchmakers, and cordwainers. The last specialized in the fine leather imported from Cordovan and Spain.

As Medieval streets were in wet weather rivers of mud, clogs, called "pattens", were worn to raise the foot above the danger level. The clogs we wear now are no longer made for this reason, nor are they hand-made.

Researching the folklore associated with shoes and leather was a little difficult because so many of the original craftspeople have been replaced by machines. My search for a true folk-cobbler or shoe person led me first to a shoe repair shop in Westfield where I was informed by the owner that I was wasting his time. His response to my inquiry was, "Get out of my store!"

After disgustedly leaving that shop, I traveled down the street to Wax-n-Wane where Whip City Leather is located. John Milligan, a Granville resident, runs and owns the shop, and he very kindly allowed me to ask all kinds of questions about his rade and schooling over a cup of coffee in the shop. I ordered a pair of his hand-crafted sandals following the interview.

THE INTERVIEW

Question: How long have you been working here?

Answer: Around eight years. Before this I was an apprentice to a shoemaker in New Jersey where I learned about places where you can't put straps and basically how people wear shoes. I "learned" leather-craft in New York City on Bleeker Street.

Q: So you never had any formal schooling in the trade?

A: No. I never read a guide that said, "This is how we do this, etc..." My schooling really started when I was thrown out into the world in 1960. Right in the middle of the meat boycott, I was an unemployed meat cutter. So I took my savings out of the bank and travelled. I went

all over Europe and the United States and ended up in New Jersey.

Q: Where does the making of shoes start? Where do you get your supplies?

A: Well, I buy the hides from a tannery. Ninety percent of the U.S. tanneries are within 150 mile radius of here. New Jersey, Boston, and New York all receive the hides I buy.

Q: And the soles?

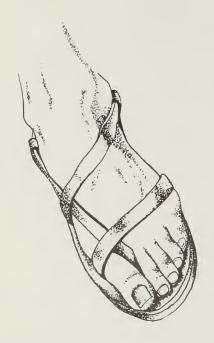
A: These soles are natural gum rubber from Maiaysia that I buy in sheets.

Q: How long will they last?

A: These sandals last around ten years, but don't forget you only wear sandals three months out of the year.

Q: How did you start making sandals?

A: First I did all personalized orders, measuring every foot, for around two to





Drawing by Annagrett Wrobleski

three years. I'd measure the arches and toes and make an outline of the person's foot on cardboard.

Q: How long did it take you to make a pair?

A: From the time I did the drawing I'd say it took me from three to four hours total.

Q: How long does it take now?

A: About an hour to make each pair. Now I have three standard patterns: small, medium, and large. After I made the same sizes so many times, I found it easier to do this way. There are basic patterns to follow, and I get information from old patterns. There's a standard size arch, but the whole sandal-making process is pretty involved.

Q: What's the hardest part?

A: The creating part. It's hard to visualize what you want something to look like. Now basically I have eight styles. Drawing a pencil sketch of what I really want is the hard part.

Q: Do you have any power tools in your craft?

A: No. I have a cutter that is rather large but no power machinery. I use the original awls and hand tools, clinching nails and an anvil. I glue the leather to the soles, using two types of glue, a base coat and a primer, along with a contact cement.

Q: What about price?

A: Well, these in the store now are leftovers from last year, and I'll probably sell them for around twenty-five dollars. Prices this year have tripled for materials so my new sandals will cost around ten dollars more.

Q: Did you ever make a shoe? Would you know how?

A: No. Shoes need *much* more knowledge. Sandals are held on by straps, and I've learned all the stress points and where I can put a strap.

Q: Do you sell a lot of sandals?

A: Well, my main product here and at

Crafts Fairs is handbags. Because of the high prices I have to limit production of sandals to customer orders. Crafts Fairs constitute forty percent of my business. Another thirty percent comes from custom orders, like a knife case, like this one here, or something specially made. The remainder of the business here is retail.

Q: Have you ever had any really different orders?

A: Well, the strangest ones are from people who have had polio. There can be a very large difference in size; sometimes one foot is a size nine and the other is a size five. These cases are few and far between, but a person in that type of a situation can really benefit from custom work.

Q: Where do you get all the tools and machines (hand-powered) that you use?

A: Usually I buy them second hand. I'll hear about a craftsman who's going out of business — say a tool shop or a saddlery — and I'll buy his tools.

Q: Do you have many dissatisfied customers?

A: There's one girl who comes in every year. She has a Great Dane, and every summer he steps on the back of her sandal and rips it out. It's no problem to fix. Everyone makes mistakes, and I've made a few where the person ends up walking off the shoe. But I learn from my mistakes.

John Milligan is a folk artist. This is revealed through his learning of leather-craft as well as his personal designs for handbags and sandals. He uses no power tools in the production of the sandals, although a sewing machine is necessary for the production of pocketbooks. He has a shop, "Whip City Leather", inside "Wax-n-Wane" in downtown Westfield where his work is on display and is for sale.

Soapstone

Quarried in Middlefield Was Much in Demand in the 19th Century

by Dorothy Potter

Few people, even those living within a short distance, know about the unusual enterprise that once flourished a fair distance from a seldom used country road in Middlefield.

About 1800 a large deposit of fine quality soapstone was discovered in the northeast section of the town on what is still called Smith Hollow Hill. Three Northampton men by the name of Shepherd (history books do not give their first names) purchased it and then sold it to Boston men who formed the Free Stone Corporation.

The unique stone was in great demand for building construction. It is soft (can be scratched with a fingernail) and feels soapy. It can be quarried by sawing, and the exposed blocks then become hard. The curious stone is generally dark green to greenish in color and was carved into ornaments by the ancient Egyptians, Assyrians and Chinese. The American Indians, knowing the stone's heat-retaining qualities, shaped it into bowls, pots, and cooking stones.

The Boston company quarried and shipped the Middlefield soapstone to their city where it was converted into various shapes for use in buildings.

Now the quarry is some 170 years old and inactive for many years. Its steep walls are covered with lichen and and moss, and trees grow from precarious ledges and niches.

Saw marks and outlines of square blocks are still very visible and a few huge sections of the quarried stone lie on the floor of the narrow quarry. A just discernible path, which was once a narrow road, connects with the county road from Chester to West Worthington that was built in 1811. The northern section of the road is very steep and a challenge to today's low-slung cars. The southern section furnished a comparatively level route for moving the stone through Huntington and Westfield to Hartford where the blocks were shipped by water to Boston.

Some of the soapstone was used locally



for doorsteps and fireplaces, and then the adventure was abandoned after the War of 1812. The stone has been used in many ways since the days of the early settlers. It was popular because of its easy workability, light color, resistance to weathering or water action and its ability to retain heat. It can be found in old homes and stores in the county, and new ones too, as floor tile, steps, laundry tubs, sinks, aquariums, wainscoting, mantels, baseboards, stair treads, tiles and spandrels. And some housewives still cherish and use the old family soapstone pancake grill.

Aside from its home use, soapstone is valuable commercially because it is resistant to chemicals and has low absorptive properties. Some types also have high dielectric strength. These attributes make it desirable for a multitude of uses in special fields...laboratory table tops, acid tanks, development tanks for photographs, and electrical insulation units. The antique footwarmers for church gatherings and for cutter driving in the winter were containers for soapstone

chunks heated in fireplaces.

According to a book on the Stone Industries published in 1924, a soapstone is initially cut from a new quarry by removing it to form a channel 100 feet long by 120 feet wide and walls 22 feet wide are left between channels. In factories gang saws and sea sand were used to cut it at the rate of about four inches per hour.

The overgrown road leading down a steep hill to the Middlefield quarry is obscure and bears little evidence of the strenuous work to bring out the blocks of stone. The quarry is not easily seen from the path but unfolds as it reaches level ground. Mature trees thriving in the channel are evidence of its abandonment scores of years ago. The only current indications of any attention are the names and dates scratched on the exposed patined walls, one as recent as last month.

Reprinted with permission from the Daily Hampshire Gazette, Oct. 26, 1974.

March 8, 1930

by Priscilla Packard Suriner of Middlefield

It was fifty years ago today Eight little girls came out to play. After an hour of games and noise (Six year olds do lack some poise.)

Everyone was hale and hearty
For they were going to a birthday party.

They were all to a table led, One chair was tied with a bow of red.

One was dressed in a coat of white Carrying a little box so tight.

One little girl had a yen for that chair But she was told to sit "over there".

One arrived in a horse and sleigh Accompanied by her mother, to stay.

This made her mad and quite unstable, For she put her feet upon the table.

One brought her little sister, dear. They lived the closest, in fact, quite near. This caused her mother some chagrin But soon peace again reigned within.

Four had braved the very cold weather To walk the length of the street together.

Attention turned to food on the table Attractive, tempting, good and stable.

The birthday girl was thrilled with delight When all these girls came into sight.

A bowl of jello came into sight Which caused a cry of sheer delight.

She shyly greeted them at the door Because she had never seen them before.

It was made in layers, so the colors showed Inverted on a plate, it really glowed.

But soon they knew each other well As they played 'Button Button', I Spy and Tell'. The little white box held no toy, But a pretty blue handkerchief case to enjoy.

Oh yes, most of the girls are around today Do you suppose we would come out to play?



Priscilla Packard was one of fifteen girls born in Cummington in the year 1924. Even though her parents moved to Pittsfield soon after her birth, she returned frequently to visit her Grandmother, Mrs. Lizzie Chilson, on the Main Street. The party was given on her birthday in the house now owned by Mrs. Ruth Giles.

The girls who were at the party were

Norma White, Nancy McClellan, Norma Parsons, Natalie Parsons, Virginia Stevens, Shirley Gloyd, and Barbara Billings. Margaret Porter and Dorothy Montgomery were invited but did not attend. Amy Shaw and Jean Sears were not invited because of an oversight on my Mother's part. (The five remaining girls I do not know.)

Quilting

Excerpted from a *Book of Blandford Facts* compiled by Plumb Brown.

by Susan E. Tiffany of Blandford

Do you remember your first bed-quilt block sewed in over and over stitch, under the direction of your Grandmother and that your stitches were inspected at intervals to see whether they "passed muster"? Did your childish fingers realize that to sew blocks beautifully was an art going back (in America at least) to the middle of the eighteenth century? A simple square block a day seemed like quite a stint, I'm sure, but finally, with practice, there came to be satisfaction in the evenly set stitches.

The calico was brown perhaps, printed with a distinct and enduring design, for both color and pattern of an earlier day had such qualities. There may have been in your family, as in mine, a Great Aunt whose fine sewing was traditional. In many families love of color, design, and skill walked hand-in-hand with thrift.

The first quilts were, with economy, fashioned of odds and ends of women's and children's clothing. The size of the scrap determined or limited the choice of pattern but made for originality and ingenuity. The labor, the neat piecing and elaborate quilting, thousands of stitches in a small space all give a present day student the feeling that love of the task, not time, was the objective.

Women took up piecing as an all engaging pastime, they exchanged patterns and materials, discussed design and admired pretty material with great zest. A quilting party at Naragansett in 1752 is told of as having lasted for ten days!

Materials of Great Grandmother's day were cotton, linens, India chintz, and French calico, of excellent quality, as fresh and bright a century later as when first used. Many quaint names are given to patterns: Rising Sun, Job's Trouble, Log Cabin, Rose of Sharon, Tree of Life, Horn of Plenty, Single Double and Triple Chain, and Wedding Ring. Some pertained to history: Rocky Road to California, Prairie Rose, Whig Rose. Others are not easily accounted for.

It took then, and it takes today, a worker of some ability to plan and cut the blocks. The design is cut from plain firm cardboard, the cloth marked out and evenly cut. The seams, when sewed, have to be taken in enough to hold well, yet not too much; if a variety of colors are used, the top must be arranged to the best advantage. When ready to quilt the mechanical process is as follows: lay the completed top flatly on a lining with layers of wool or cotton wadding between and the edges basted all around.

Alice Morse Earle thus describes the quilting frame: "Four bars of wood, about ten feet long, were placed at the edges, the quilt sewed to them with stout thread, the bars crossed and tied firmly at the corners, and the whole raised on chairs or tables to a convenient height. Around the outstretched quilt a dozen workers could sit running the whole together with fanciful or set designs of stitching. When about a foot on either side was wholly quilted,

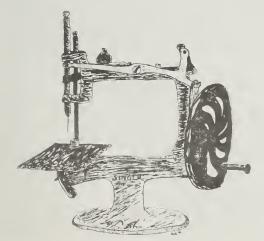
it was rolled upon its bar and the work went on in a united and truly sociable way that required no special attention, in which all were facing together and all drawing closer together as the afternoon passed."

Quilting designs were sometimes outlined for working by holding up a chalked string and snapping it down on the quilt, leaving a faint line to guide the eye and needle.

Elaborate quilts of silk are treasured heirlooms, the blocks set together with fine or fancy stitches, the lining quite likely to be breadths from the ample skirt of a wedding gown.

Confortables or tied quilts were often heavy and sustained their name well for use in a real country winter. Pictures on the linings brought strange fancies to small sleepers beneath them and gentle smiles of memory to older eyes. There are beautiful old appliqued quilt tops, and there is, in the Connecticut Valley Historical Collection, a white coverlet with padded quilting to show a raised pattern of design in the finest of stitches.

In most American homes quilting suffered an eclipse from 1895 to perhaps ten years ago (1927), though it has never ceased in our Southern mountains. Now it has become popular again and there are fine examples of modern workmanship, either copies of the old patterns or taking





up new subjects, for instance, an airship propeller as the motif. The point of economy is not so strictly adhered to in the new work where often only two colors are used.

The Eastern States Exposition at Springfield has had at least two fascinating, educational exhibits of quilts of every description. While it is possible to send quilt tops south for fine stitchery and completion to Tennessee or Kentucky mountain women, there are those in North Blandford who have been faithful to the skillful needle craft of their grandmothers.

The North Blandford Kings Daughters circle has been quilting for about forty years to earn money for the church, relining old quilts, completing new, and tying comfortables in masterly fashion. Eight members meet regularly each week in summer to ply their needles and enjoy the fellowship.

Among old fashioned, now revived, arts, quilting must be given an honored place as a medium of sociability and a representative craft.

Conversations with Two Windsorites

by Bernard Drew of Great Barrington

Both May Hitchcock and Fred Bird have lived in Windsor for years. They shared these reminiscences of places and ways now gone.

Mary L. (May) Hitchcock, the daughter of J. Frank and Libbie Leslie, was born in Dalton on April 1, 1890. She says the date accounts for her behavior. She moved with her folks to Windsor when they bought the former Barber farm on Savoy Hollow Road in 1900.

"I was my father's son," she says, telling how she drove horses and handled hens and cattle when her dad was out logging. They had 10-12 head, and sold butter to people in Dalton. "In those days he probably made a good living, though my mother was always lonesome there."

The farm was, indeed, remote; by the time the Leslies came there, there were no other families on the road between the farm and Windsor center. May and her sister went to school by horse and buggy. One year a wildcat followed them to school and from time to time popped out from behind a stone wall and scared them and the horse, Nell. Father Leslie gave May a revolver and told her to shoot it at the cat to scare it off. She never did, but she kept the gun through the years (now with a broken trigger) and just a few days before the interview used it to scare off an intruder in her home!

May says the farm "had a beautiful maple orchard. For years my father made maple syrup and he was so happy to get a dollar a gallon." But the land "was too rough; he lost a horse a year." The stone framework for a sugar arch, and what probably was the base to the sawmill are still visible near a stream close to the old farmstead.

The old Thomas Barber house "was really beautiful, I see it vividly." It was apparently not a very old structure with eight rooms.

When, after 17 years, the Leslies moved to another homestead on Peru Road, "there was a lovely old organ in the house which we had to leave behind. When we went back for it, it and several other things had been stolen. It happened even in those days."

The place was sold to a wealthy neighbor and the buildings fell to ruin. The last time May saw it, Col. Arthur Budd and Warren Drew took her there. It was about 15 years ago. The colonel insisted she take home an old bicycle wheel as a memento. "Now, what was I supposed to do with that!" she exclaims.

May went to high school in Dalton, attended the Massachusetts School of Art and in later years devoted long service to the school district, to the 4-H and to the Windsor Ladies Aid Society. Her father



Frank Leslie was an assessor and selectman — he held the latter post into his 84th year — and for a long time he headed the town Republican committee. May followed

her father's footsteps in Republican activities for many years. She lives in Pittsfield now, though she keeps a summer place in Windsor — where her roots are.



Only a cellarhole and a few rotten boards remain of the Barber Place in Windsor. Photo by Bernard Drew Frederick Bush grew up and still lives in Windsor Bush*, not that far from where Mary Hitchcock lived — if there were still a road between. The Birds were among the first to settle the area. "Ebenezer Bird had a place below Coleman's," he says. His son Darius (Fred's grandfather) settled closer to West Cummington. Fred's father bought the farm where Fred still lives. "Straight up by the Bush Cemetery was the Ambrose Coleman place, a beautiful farm. I envied the big barns. Mine was little and not big enough to keep anything in."

As has already been mentioned, a road connecting Savoy Hollow Road and River Road, known as River Branch Road, was long ago given up. Similarly, there once

*Fred Bird died in December 1979 at the age of 82, after this article had been written.

was a road going from Windsor Bush Road to Windsor Pond. (The pond is now inaccessible except through Savoy.)

"When I first married," says Fred, "I built a dance hall at the pond. I made a road around the beach to my end of the pond... We had dances there two or three years. Joe McCormick of Windsor did the calling. The hall wasn't built the way it should have been, and the snow broke it down..."

Fred loved to dance, and he remembers there was another hall in West Cummington which was the subject of a minor feud among church members. Also, "They'd have dances at the Deer Hill House after Cummington Fair. The floor really shook when the big men were on the floor."

Fred knew Dr. Starkweather who lived in that village. "I went to him years ago. If you were sick, you could call and he'd stop on the way through in his buggy or



Early photograph shows the Darius Bird homestead in Windsor Bush.

(Windsor Historical Commission collection)

sleigh. Folks said the Phelps family in Savoy had babies every so often and you could tell, if you saw the doctor going by, that he was probably going there. They had seven or eight children.

"My father was a big man," says Fred. "He ran a meat wagon and I liked to go along. I remember stopping to see Mrs. Bates (who had an estate on Shaw Road). She came out and said, "Mr. Bird, — I'd never heard my father called that before — "Mr. Bird, I'd like a 7 or 8 pound roast, you know just what I'd like," And he'd have it."

The wagon route also included East Windsor. "I remember the time the drying rack in Charlie Ball's skewer mill* caught fire. It was on the top floor. They ran to tell him, but he didn't rush over, he just walked. By the time he got there he had it all thought out and he told the men how to put it out. It saved the building." Both Ball and Fred's father, he remarks with a grin, weighed about 250-275 lbs. "They were big men."

Fred himself engaged in various jobs over the years. When he was "a little cuss," neighbor Wells Coleman ("a fine fiddle player") had a spruce oil still run by steam. Fred later had one himself. "I bought an iron kettle in Savoy and made some oil in it. Summer and fall were the best time. I got 32¢ a pound, later 35¢ was

*Stone Walls, Spring 1978, p. 15.

offered by a man in Savoy, so I sold to him." How good a medication was it? "You could work with the still in cold weather late in the fall with your shirt off, and never catch a cold. It was good for rheumatism. I still have some in the attic."

He remembers another Bush industry, the talc mine which operated not far from his house. "They had a four horse hitch on the stone crusher. All through that section used to be fields. I loved to see the engine running at the mine. They'd drop a barrel into the hole to bring the talc up. (It was then crushed, bagged, and hauled to the train at Charlemont.) A bell would ring if the men in the mine wanted to ride up in the barrel."

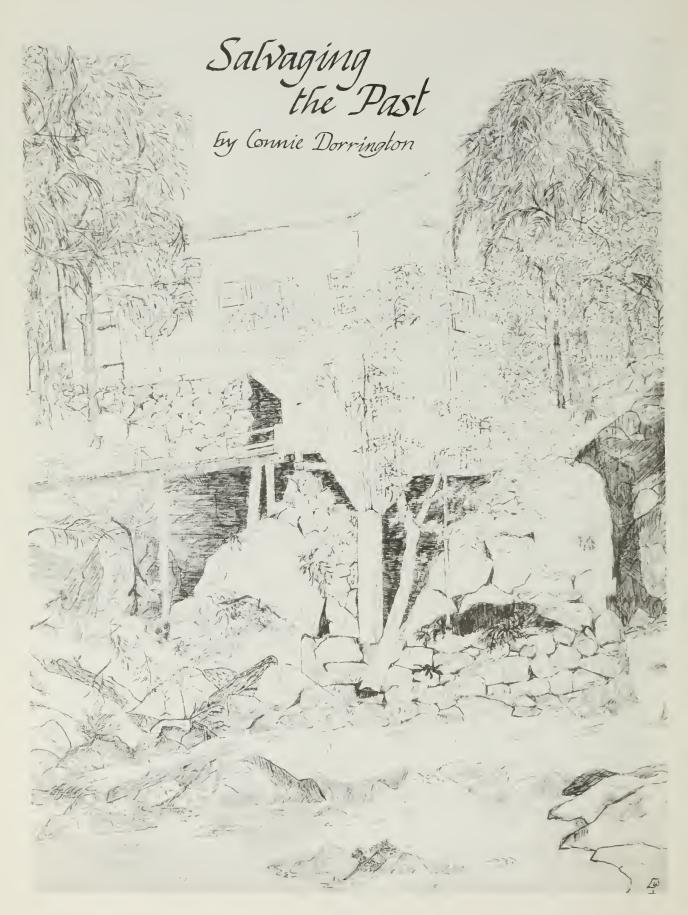
Fred was long involved in maple sugaring, as a maker and as an equipment salesman. He got his first evaporator when he was 14. "It was 4 by 10 feet. I burned it up once. Later I had a 5 by 14 footer and I could boil fast with it." Nevertheless, he admits to being jealous of neighbor Coleman, who boiled with steam from his sawmill.

The Bush native enjoyed the corn husking bees years ago. "Everyone came and they'd throw in a red ear. Whoever got that could kiss a girl. They would have a dance afterward (of course!) usually in the kitchen of a building near Windigo."

Although he's lived elsewhere, Fred has stuck close to the Bush. "Guess I'm just a hick," he says.

Springfield teacher doing research on Cobble Mountain Reservoir seeks information on forests, lumbering, land use, hill farms and wildlife in the area, especially in the period before construction of the dam (1928).

Please contact: Dietrich Schlobohm, 52 Popular Ave., W. Springfield, Mass. 01089 or Editor of STONE WALLS



The work of Lafayette Stevens¹ might have crumbled and returned to the soil had Roger Gunn not followed up on a friend's word that there was a deserted mill on Bronson Brook in 1976. True, you had to get within 15-20 feet of the building to see it, so over-grown with brush and hemlock was the area. It had been vandalized along with natural decay and was to be demolished as it had become an attractive nuisance.

Lafayette, seven generations removed from John (who left England for America in 1620), was born 166 years ago in what is known as Stevensville on the Worthington/West Chesterfield line on Route 124. His home sits beside the road today. When he was 33 years old his father, brother and a partner deeded Lafayette three acres of land on which to build a grist mill. Should that prove unprofitable he was to have the "privilege" of putting in other machinery provided it did not interfere with his brother's mill up-stream several hundred yards. As the flour milling trade decreased he turned to making small wooden objects such as sap spouts, rolling pins, drum sticks, mouse traps and embroidery hoops.

Once again the mill is beautiful to behold. The hemlocks have been thinned to let in the sunshine. In turn they have been sawed into lumber for Rogers workshop. The maples have been left to grow into a sugar bush. The mill itself has been painted a soft green insulated and made sound with new sills. Being built into the ledge on the side of a gorge, 1/3 of the building over-hangs the brook which is never silent. The vertical shaft turbine is still in place, the housing for which is cantilevered off the back. Parts were found buried in six feet of silt. Someday Roger and Linda Wronski, co-owner, artist and sign painter, who also lives in the mill, hope to rebuild the washed-out dam and penstock to generate their own electricity.



Down in the lowest level, originally open to the elements but now enclosed, you actually get a feeling of how the mill worked as you look at the giant shaft and laminated main power wheel. Here too can be seen an S carved into a rock-hard beech timber. The initial, some think, indicates the lumber, showing up and down saw marks², was custom cut. On this level also are root cellars and a bathroom. The septic tank is about 100 feet up on the side hill so sewerage is pumped there electrically. A thousand yards of gravel had to be hauled in to make the leach field which is now planted with yound apple trees.

The main floor of the mill was originally a single span, $26' \times 34'$. It seemed prudent to insert several supports which delineate kitchen, living- and dining-room



areas, though it is still one enormous room of 950 square feet. The plank floor is scarred by horses' shoes as they unloaded grain for grinding and there is a ring in the floor used as a tie-down. Putting an ear to the back wall you can hear bees buzzing. Their honey seeps down the clapboards and into the brook. Back when Alfred, Lafayette's son, ran the mill he noticed bees going into a hole in the wall so he built a box into that wall with glass facing inside so they could watch the bees at work. Since it was hinged they could remove some of the honey as well.

From upstairs you can look down nearly 50 feet to the rushing river and tiny sand beach overhung by hemlocks. Up here are now three bright and cheerful bedrooms and a plant-filled hallway. The window glass is cracked in many places but because it is the original hand-blown, brittle glass it has been carefully epoxied

and saved. In a corner is one of two water storage tanks of 125 gallon capacity each that are pumped full twice a week from the spring on the hill.

The sole heat source for the mill is a tall, shined black and nickel Glenwood Oak; one of a pair that heated Peases' Store in Chester years ago. The entire structure is finished and furnished with love and antiques.

The newest addition to the millsite is Roger's and Linda's pride. Walter Towers³ sugar house was towed about 2 miles from its location up the road using only its new sills as runners. Even the bird's nest in the eves was undisturbed. It now after strenuous labor, nestles among the young maples on the boulder patch between the mill and the road. In a corner is carved "WT April '18" and on a nail hand harness parts, reminders of other men in other days. Even the old Warren evaporator has been located and reinstalled. Walter's father, Henry, bought it in 1906 from Charlie Cudworth who was a dealer, for \$180.00, new. This building was also made of boards cut on an up and down saw mill. Inside is a nice wooden. ironbound collection tank and on the roof are the galvanized tin shingles, now tarred to preserve them. Even the stone foundation and door stone have been moved and set in place, ready for another hundred years of sugar making.

The Tower family and the Stevens family can rest easy. The labors of their lives are still bearing fruit, thanks to Roger and Linda.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 See Stone Walls, vol. 2 no. 4,
 - "From the Diary of L.F. Stevens"
- 2 See Stone Walls, vol. 2, no. 4,
 - "Model of Up and Down Sawmill"
- 3 See Stone Walls, vol. 5, no. 1,
 - "A Conversation with Walt Tower"

Solar Kiln

by Dean Rynerson of Worthington

Beautiful wood grows in the hills. The problem that we woodworkers have is turning all those lovely pine, maple, cherry, ash and oak trees into usable lumber. There are local sawmills that sell green (freshly sawn) boards, but this wood is sixty to eighty percent water. Wood is hydroscopic (varies in size depending on moisture content) so it must be dried before use. Storing lumber in a dry attic or shed for a few years can dry it to about twenty percent moisture content, but the modern method is the dry kiln.

Dry kilns can dry most wood to six percent moisture content in less than a month, but they deal in huge quantities of lumber and use huge quantities of gas, coal, or oil to heat them. I decided that I wanted a small kiln to dry my own wood and, a step farther, my own sawmill to selectively cut the timber myself.

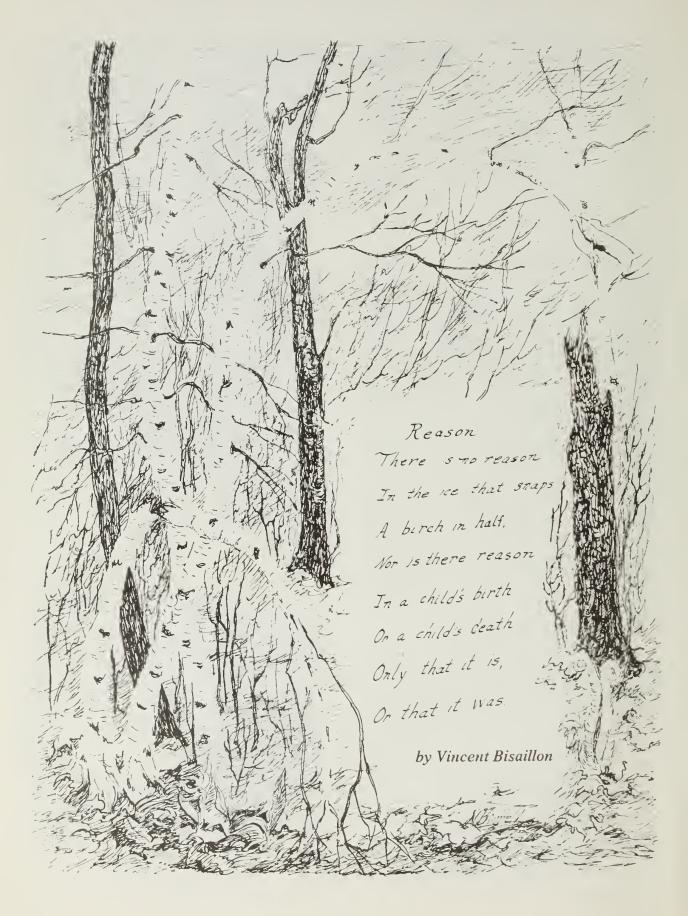
Luckily, small solar kilns (the sun is a source of free fuel) have been designed and portable sawmills, using chain saw motors, are being made. I refined the kiln design, using attic fans to circulate the kiln's air down a condensation wall, and then wrote an "Appropriate Technology" grant proposal which I submitted to the Department of Energy.

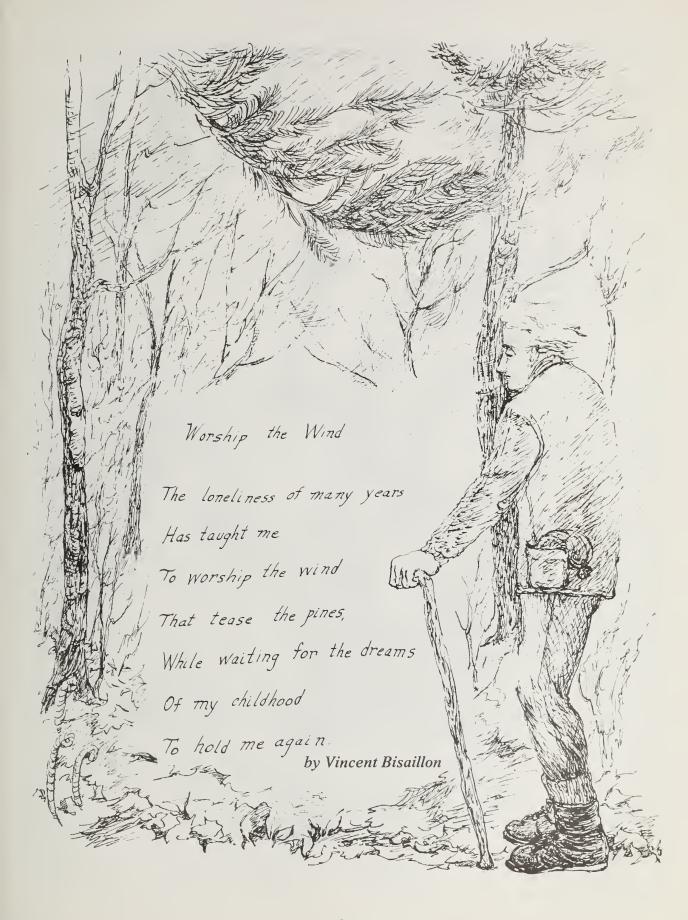
The Department of Energy said, "If you can produce kiln-dried lumber without skidders, logging trucks, boxcars, forklifts, or oil-fired kilns, try it." My grant was approved.

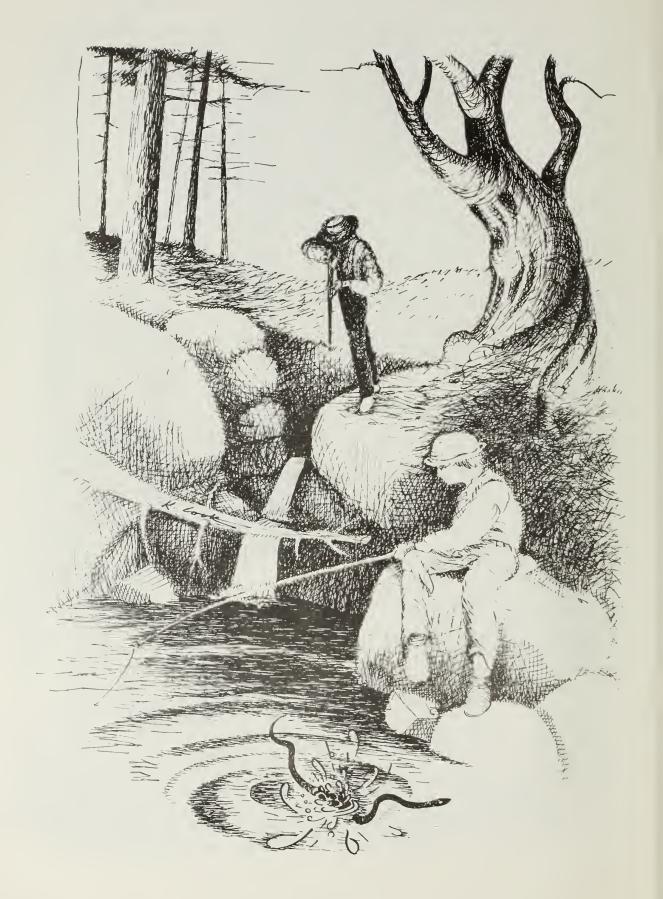
The kiln was constructed this summer using double-glazed polyester as the solar collecting surface. The temperatures reached over 130 degrees F in the fall and wood seems to be drying nicely. Trees have been felled and bucked for milling in the woods. We'll be milling this winter and taking the boards to the kiln in a trailer towed by a farm tractor. By eliminating all the transportation and handling from woodlot to retailer, kiln dried lumber will be produced cheaply with a minimum of fossil fuel consumption.

The solar drykiln can be seen on Route 112 in Worthington just north of milesign 13.









I Remember Crescent Mills Part Two

by Clifford L. Kites
East Longmeadow

In May 26, 1948 issue of the Spring-field Daily News, in the Looking Backward column, and in the 50 years ago news, the following item appeared: "C.L. Kites of this city caught 53 trout between Middle-field and Becket." That was 63 years ago. You can readily see that there were plenty of trout in the streams many years ago.

One summer there was a big trout in the wheelrace of Ledru Clark's sawmill on Taylor Brook, that Willis Carrington, a small boy, and adopted son of Charles Carrington, had been trying to catch for a long time. One day I caught the trout, and took it up to show Willis. He felt so bad about me catching it, that he cried so I gave him the trout that he had tried so long and hard to catch.

Father thought it was all right for me to go fishing alone on the nearby brooks, but when I wanted to go to West Worthington on the Middle Branch, or Beckett on the West Branch he had Levi Perkins go with me. We hired Frank Monat who had a livery stable in Huntington to drive up up to West Worthington in the early morning, and pick us up at the end of the day, but when we went to Beckett we went by train.

Levi had a .22 caliber Stevens rifle with a detachable skeleton stock, that he always carried when we went fishing. He carried the rifle part in one hind pocket, and the stock in the other one. One day we were fishing between Beckett and Middlefield when a small black snake started to swim across the river right in front of us. By the

time Levi got the rifle together and loaded, the snake was halfways across the river, and downstream quite a ways from us. He took a shot at the snake and cut it right in half. I think that was the finest shot I ever saw.

Mount Tekoa in Montgomery, across the river from Woronoco, is noted for its rattlesnakes, and Rock House mountain, also in Montgomery for its wildcats, and many have been shot there. At one time I had a rattlesnake skin that had ten rattles on it. It was killed by a friend of mine in the railroad yard in Woronoco. A rattlesnake with ten rattles is a big one.

On a ledge in back of our home stood a big sugar maple tree that I used to tap every year, and boil the sap down into sirup on the kitchen range. As I remember it took ten quarts of sap to make a cup of sirup, and everything in the kitchen would be sticky from the steam of the boiling sap.

Bernice Aldrich, who was superintendent of the paper mill after the death of my father, and I were very good friends, and I spent much time in his department, talking with him, and at night fishing for eels with hand lines out of the paper mill window. We baited big hooks with a piece of salt pork, and many the eel did we catch, and many the one did we lose, as we had to haul them up about fifty feet from the water.

I never have eaten an eel, but one time I cleaned one and had it cooked, but when it was ready to eat I backed out. They are

considered fine eating and so is rattlesnake meat nowadays, but I don't believe it.

Many years ago the town of Woronoco was named Salmon Falls, so named because salmon used to swim up the Westfield River from the Connecticut as far as the falls there, but could not get any farther upstream because the dam there was too high for them to leap. Years later the name of the town was changed to Fairfield, as there was a Salmon Falls in New Hampshire and the mails used to get mixed up. Then it was changed to Woronoco for the same reason as there was a Fairfield in Vermont. It is hard to make me believe that a little eel five or six inches long could get over that high dam in Woronoco, that a big fish like the salmon is, couldn't leap on account of its height.

When I was a very small boy, Norwich Lake (then known as Norwich Pond) was stocked with pickerel and smallmouthed black bass, and was closed to all fishing for four years. Father was never much of a fisherman, and the only time I remember of him going trout fishing was with Levi Perkins and me on Black Brook in Blandford. But after he built the first cottage at Norwich Lake in 1890, he occasionally went pond fishing there.

For the opening day father bought a new trolling spoon, and kept it in a box on the top shelf of a small closet in the dining room, where he probably thought I could not reach it. Many times unbeknown to him did I climb up on the shelves and take it down, to admire the red and silver spoon, and the three big gang hooks surrounded with red and white feathers.

Then came the time of opening day, and about everybody for miles around went fishing. And I guess everyone had good luck. My father brought home a big string of pickerel, whether he caught them or not I never knew. He put them in the big

ice box in the shed, and many times I went there to have a look at them. By standing on tiptoes I could look into the icebox. I don't know just how many there were, but they stretched the whole length of the ice box. Those big fish made a great impression on me, and I longed for the time to come when I would be big enough to catch fish like them.

Anyone who does much fishing, is well acquainted with that ugly looking but fine bass bait, the hellgrammite, commonly called Hobson. And their disposition is just as ugly as their looks, as anyone who has been pinched by their powerful jaws can testify. Confine a number of them together in a box, and in a short time you won't have many dobsons, not live ones, as they are great fighters, and kill each other.

Early one morning, Levi Perkins and I were walking to Huntington together, to board a train to Becket for a day of trout fishing on the West Branch of the Westfield River. We had to walk a mile and a half to reach the railroad station, and had hardly started, when we saw the strangest sight we ever had seen. There were hundreds of them, and they were moving from the river across the road, and were going up a bank into a virgin forest that extended to the top of the mountain. There were so many of them we couldn't move forward without stepping on them.

The Hellgrammites spend the larval stage of two years and eleven months, in swiftly running water under flat stones. Then they leave the water and dig a hole in the sand, or in a log, or under the bark of a tree, in which they stay about a month. During that time they pupate, and change into the dobson fly. That is a big gauzewinged insect that we see flying around street lights on an evening in the summertime. When they leave the water fully grown, they do not as a rule travel very far, but are very energetic while about it,



sometimes climbing trees, and have been known to climb up the sides of houses, and drop down the chimney into the fireplace. The nature books tell us that dobsons travel only at night, but there they were, hundreds of them in broad daylight. I see many things in the nature books I disagree with.

It is against the law now to snare and sell wild game, but many years ago snaring was legal, and many hunters and trappers made good money snaring partridges in twitch-up snares, and catching wild rabbits in box traps baited with an apple. It was a common sight years ago to see a string of partridges, quail, and woodcock, hanging in front of meat markets, and on the sidewalk a barrel ended up, and covered with wild rabbits.

There were several ways of snaring partridges, but the twitch-up snare was mostly used, and here is the way they were made. Two sticks an inch thick, and about fifteen inches long, were driven into the ground, with a foot of them above the surface. They were placed on a cowpath through the woods, or in an open spot in the woods. The sticks were placed about six inches apart and on the inside of the sticks a notch was cut two inches down

from the tops, and into the notches was fitted a piece of wood whittled down thin on the ends. A small tree was trimmed of its branches, and bent down and fastened with a short piece of rope to hold it down. The tree was fastened to the crosspiece in the sticks.

On the underside of the crosspiece was attached the snare or a very fine wire, with an opening about three inches in diameter, big enough so that the partridge's head could pass trough it easily. A low brush fence was built running up to the snare on both sides, but in the opposite direction from the cow path. Corn was scattered on the ground both sides of the snare, and as the partridge fed along on the ground and came to the fence, instead of jumping over it as he could easily do, he would stick his head through the snare to reach the corn on the other side, and the loop would tighten on his neck, and his struggle to get free would disengage the crosspiece in the notch of the sticks, and up into the air he would go hanging by his neck. The partridge is a very wise bird, but he never knew enough to jump over the fence. I used to snare them when I was a boy, but after I got a shotgun I found it much more fun to shoot them, and much less work.

Cemetery Love

by Virginia Ladd Otis of Goshen

Stopping in at the attractive little cemetery in West Chesterfield, which is surrounded by a wall with a gate, we found the white stone of Esther Dunham. It bears the unusual lily bas-relief and has the following inspiring message: "Strengthened by a firm belief in God's goodness, and accepting Spiritual Communion as a fact, she met the phenomenon of life called death with serene composure. Death to her was Emancipation, Light, and Liberty." Mrs. Dunham was only 25 years old when she died.

In a South Worthington cemetery, the stone of the widow Sarah Littlefield, 1794, has been publicized in a book by Gillon, Early New England Gravestone Rubbings. Pictured in the book, it has a head carving with "odd" wings, looking a bit like pigtails. The book gives the symbolism of some of the motifs on gravestones. Death's heads are emblems of man's mortality, while wings are symbolic of the flight of the soul. Winged cherubs evoke the spirituality of the world to come. Ornamental grapevines symbolize the rewards of heaven, bringing to mind Christ's parable of the vineyards, while oak leaves symbolize the strength of faith. Heads enclosed in a circle may represent a nimbus, while a crown above a head or skull is a symbol of the soul's victory over death. Floral motifs represent the rewards of heaven. Suns represent resurrection after death. A single flower at the top of a

stone may signify that the soul attains its most perfect state after death. Cypress trees or willow trees and the urn stand for mourning and death. They are characteristic of a sentimental period at the turn of the 19th century. Other symbols observed are the pointing hand, emblem of God; the dove, a symbol of devotion and innocence, as well as the Holy Ghost; anchor, symbol of hope; a rope, expression of eternity; and a number of Masonic symbols, such as the crescent moon or eight-pointed star, symbols of nature's obedience to God, and pillers, reminiscent of King Soloman's temple.

In the Goshen cemetery we read the following brief pieces of advice: "Giddy mortals, stop and think," and "Boast not thyself of tommorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Being interested in old names now out of usage, we found two of them on old markers of "mica slate" or carved slabs of goshen schist. One is that of Gad Lyman, 1791, with his daughter, Thankful, 1777 nearby. The other, facing the wrong way, is engraved "Nabby Chapin, consort of Rev. Joel Chapin, 1805."

The most unusual women's names we found wee Tryphena, Mahitable, Wealthy, Sadie, Elvirah, Minerva, Alcander, Bathsheba, Clemina, Fidelia, Electa, Tryphosa, Lucretia, Permelia, Aurelia, Clarinda, Almira, Almeda, Emeline, and Abigail.

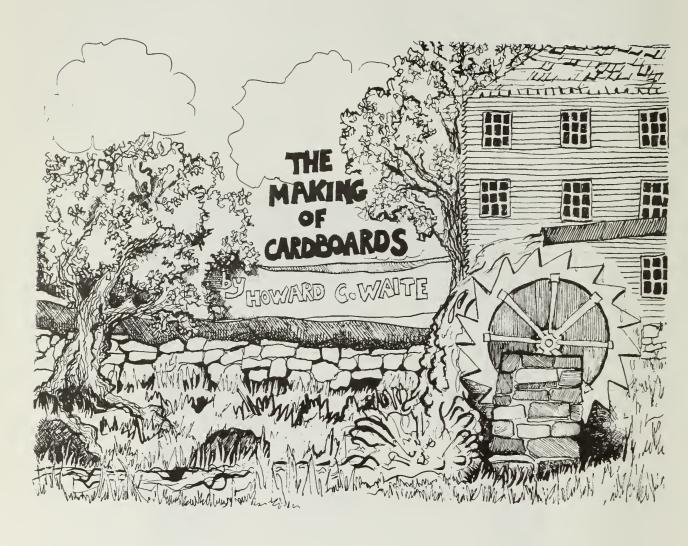
Men's names leaned to the biblical and

are as follows: Archesa, Zacharia, Joshua, Jacob, Elihu, Cyrus, Elijah, Hiram, Levi, Lazarus, Isaac, Jonah, Rufus, Freeman, Gershom, Malachi, Freebun, Ezra, Reuben, Josiah, Ebenezer, Alpheus, Simeon, Eleazer, Alphesus, Milo, Caleb, and Origin.

A narrow section of the old part of the Goshen cemetery along the south wall is devoid of markers for a hundred feet or more. This was the paupers' section where people "on the town" were buried without a service or grave markers. Philip Porter, 86, who has been cemetery keeper for over 50 years and who helped his father, who was the keeper before that, remembers burying some of the paupers there.

A book, *Comic Epitaphs*, gives an English one: "She lived with her husband fifty years...and died in the confident hope of a better life."





The making of cardboard, such as those used for carding cattle is an old industry.

The Waite cardboard factory, which was in operation from the time it was built by the two brothers, Addison and Charles Waite, in 1846 until 1911, was located on the Meadow Brook in North Blandford. Addison Waite retired around 1880, and after Charles Waite's death in 1904, the business was carried on by his sons, B.H.

and F.M. Waite until the City of Springfield bought them out in 1911.

Shortly after the shop building was constructed, the Waite dam was built to furnish water power to run the wheel. This wheel was the over-shot type, being build of wood, by hand, and it was 22 feet in diameter. After 45 years of use, this wheel wore out and it was replaced with 10 inch wheel to run the saw mill, with a

12 foot draft tube, running under 50 feet of head.

The building was 40 feet by 70 feet, three stories high. The first floor of the building was used as the shipping room. Wagons and ox carts were backed up to the large door to be loaded. One-half of the second floor was used as the finishing room and the other half served as the saw room. The third floor was used as an attic or store room, while the 15 foot basement made ample place for the fly wheels, and the rest of the machinery used. Ten feet below the basement floor was located the 10 inch wheel used in the saw mill, and the 12 inch wheel used in the finishing room was located in the brook.

From eight to ten men were employed here in the spring of the year, this being the busiest time of the year in this type of business.

The finished cardboards were hauled to Chester to be shipped. It was possible to make two trips per day with horses and one trip per day with oxen. Six cases were taken to the load. Provisions and grain were brought home on the return trip, thus saving an extra trip being made for these provisions.

There were sixteen different sizes of cardboards. Beech boards were used for cardboards which were used for cleaning cattle and horses. Each case of cattle — size boards contained 3200 boards and each case weighed 640 pounds. Bass boards were made into cardboards which were sold to cotton and woolen mills, some of these being four feet long and having double handles. Hatter-jacks were the smallest cardboards made, these being about 4½ inches long, and these were used for cleaning high silk hats.

BOARDS

The making of these cardboards represented a lot of hard work and required numerous processes.

About the first of October, and on through winter, beech logs were felled and piled in the woods. In the winter, these logs were drawn, by oxen, and piled in the shop yard. Around March 10, the process of sawing began.

The logs were cut into blocks 12 inches long. These blocks were cut on the "blocker" this machine being made up of two saws, one hanging above the other. The power for this saw mill was furnished by the 10-inch wheel, running under 50 feet of head. The bottom saw was 42 inches in diameter, and the top saw 28 inches in diameter.

After being cut into 12-inch lengths, these blocks were put on a 3 foot mill saw, halved and quartered. They were then taken to the board saw and sawed, bark side down, clapboard fashion, 5/8 inches on the bottom and 3/8 inches on the top. The "elevator" (this was really an endless belt) then carried them to the ox carts and in this manner they were removed to the yard where they were stacked. It was possible to saw from 8,000 to 10,000 of these boards per day. These boards were allowed to remain outside to season until about September 1st, at which time they were taken to the stock room and piled.

From the stock room, the boards were taken to the "squarer" to be squared. This squarer consists of a jointer, four feet in diameter, with four sharp knives. By the revolution of these knives, the bark was removed from the boards.

The "splitting" saw was the next step. This machine was used to make the boards a uniform width. (It was necessary to saw only one side of each board to make the width uniform inasmuch as the jointer removed the bark on the other side.)

The "gang" saw came next in line. This saw squared both ends of the board at the same time. From here, the boards were taken to the planer, which planed all sides evenly. The first planer gave the boards a slight hollow. The back-side planer, contrary to the first planer, planed the boards in an oval shape. These boards were all planed on a degree of a 45 foot circle.

The next machine used was the "gaining" machine; this machine consisted of two knives, set in V shape. This made the slots into which the handles were inserted. These slots were about ¾ inches long and 1¼ inches deep.

The "Tumbling" barrel, 4 feet in diameter and 6 feet long, was located in the basement and the boards were next put into this barrel. Each time some boards were put into this barrel, a handful of mutton tallow was also added, this helping to smooth up the boards.

HANDLES

The logs which were used for handles were cut and blocked in 8 inch lengths, and were sawed in planks 1½ inches thick, and split ½ inches wide. It was possible to turn 30,000 to 40,000 of these handles per day. These were tossed into a cart and taken to the stock room and shovelled in heaps, piled on slabs. These were allowed to remain here, to season, until September or October before being removed to the dry shed.

After being seasoned, these blocks of wood were turned in a "shaping" machine, consisting of two sets of knives, (three knives on the outside and two knives in the inside) 15,000 to 20,000 of these could be turned each day.

They then were removed to the "lipping" machine where the handles were laid in flat. This lipping machine did six operations at once:

- 1-2 Cut both ends off
- 3 Cut slot for the board to be inserted
- 4 Roll out the throat
- 5 Polish both ends

This machine was 5 feet long and 2 feet wide, and was made of two knives and six saws. Some of these saws were placed end ways and some were placed down flat.

The handles were conveyed from the lipping machine to the tumbling barrel (the same tumbling barrel into which the boards were placed) by way of an endless belt. They were allowed to roll here for about three-quarters of an hour (to smooth them up), after which they were put into the boards. These handles were driven in by hand with a heavy hammer.

INCIDENTS

There are some funny incidents in connection with the manufacture of these cardboards.

The tumbling barrel served a double purpose — it was used in the making of the cardboards and it also was a source of amusement to the children when not in use. This barrel was so large it was possible for a child to stand erect in it, and often times children got into this barrel and rolled around.

After each heavy rain, the eels were quite a problem. Outside the shop, situated between the building and the pond, was the bulkhead. This contained a rack, which served to keep the sticks from getting into the over shot wheel. At times, there were so many of these eels that no water could get through this rack and it was necessary to don rubber boots and clean these eels out. Often times as many as 3 flour barrels of solid eels were removed at one time. Sometimes these were shipped to Springfield.

The logs used in making these cardboards were hauled as far as five miles, by oxen. It was necessary to go across Waite's Pond, which was about ³/₄ of a mile long. The mercury was as low as 34 below zero and a number of times the noses of the oxen were frozen.

Catching Up

With Old Stories

STONE WALLS magazine has been published for some four years now (it doesn't seem that long) and it seems time to take a breath, and catch up with some old stories. No researcher or writer can ever present the whole story of a person's life or historical event. There's always more, some tidbit overlooked or anecdote unheard. So we've accumulated a number of postscripts to articles which have appeared within STONE WALLS' pages. We invite our readers to submit more. We don't get enough mail!

If you missed seeing the original articles, we still have copies of all but the first issue on hand. Some are in limited supply. Back issues may be ordered for \$2.00 each, postpaid, from STONE WALLS, Box 85, Huntington, MA 01050.

An index compiled by the editors to appear in a later issue will help you locate articles of interest.

* * *

Babbitt axes, made in the Windsor/Savoy area, were described in our Winter 1979 number. Leon D. Thayer of Cummington said he didn't have an axe, "but I have a hog sticking knife which was made there. It was made by hand and worn down at least an inch. 'Hog-skinner' Brown, who used to go around butchering, had it. My grandfather was beginning to do some butchering and met Mr. Brown, who was 'getting on', and he said, 'Charlie, I hear you are taking over butchering and I'm glad, I'm too old, and I want you to have my knife made for me at the axe factory.'

"About the axes, there may be one around somewhere. Fred Stone of Lithia married a Craft or Ashfield whose folks had run a general store. When they were going to close, Fred 'poked around' and uncovered a Savoy axe, new. He took it home. I was at the Fred Stone auction and don't remember it being sold, so someone around here may still have it."

In the Summer 1977 and Spring 1978 issues, articles told of Charlie Ball, bridge builder and woodworking mill operator in East Windsor. An obituary notice from an unidentified 1929 newspaper relates Ball's fondness for children: "The good-natured Mr. Ball was beloved by all the children of the village who for years have rushed to "Uncle Charlie's home to show him a present received or the good marks earned in school.

"Christmas in the village was almost always a family affair and Charles Ball always took care that every individual was remembered by St. Nicholas. He did much to help the needy and was a staunch supporter of the church..."

About the Ball bridges: When the first article appeared, there were four known pipe bridges and one steel beam structure in these hilltowns. No new ones have been discovered, but one has been lost. The Hinsdale span, undermined by industrious beavers, was torn out by the road crew there in fall 1978. The Windsor Historical Commission hopes to acquire pieces of the bridge truss for its museum. The Commission already has a name plate taken (with permission) from the disused Worthington bridge. Other Ball bridges are in Windsor, Dalton and Cummington.

* * *





STONE WALLS' premiere issue featured an article about Alice Steele of Cummington, maker of delightful miniature house scenes and shadowboxes. "I'm still working on the stuff," she said recently, her eyes sparkling as she described a cache of trinkets and gewgaws found in a jeweler's loft the previous winter.

"I'd rather do room scenes," she said, "but they're harder. And the orders have been flying in for the shadowboxes (which sell for \$150 and up) so I've been doing those. It's a job to find things that fit in, the space is so tiny. I cut some out of bigger things. My brother, Charlie Cud-

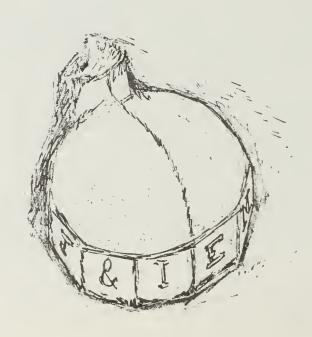
worth, made a tool for me to round and flatten bottle caps to make small pie plates. I soak the caps in water to get the cork out, then use that for little layer cakes or cupcakes."

In the spring of 1979, Mrs. Steele exchanged one of her shadowboxes for an oil painting of the now-gone Cummington covered bridge done by Olive Volsky of Windsor. The items hang in their respective towns' historical buildings. "That's absolutely beautiful," Mrs. Steele said when she saw the painting. "You know, that's Newell Horton in the carriage. He had an old white horse, and lived up on the hill."

The magnificent stone arch railroad bridges in Chester and Middlefield were described in the Spring 1979 issue. To quote further from Carl Libardi's letter that inspired our research: "Apparently the sole initial objective of those early planners, engineers and builders was to build a railroad west from...Boston to Albany...But so engrossed had they been with their original plans and with the task of achieving precisely this objective, they failed to make allowances for any future expansion or for any increase in traffic. Then, shortly before the out-break of the Civil War, with the innovation of the coalburning steam engines, plus enormously increased demand for freight and passenger service, an expanded roadbed became necessary. It suddenly became painfully obvious that the success of their initial venture had exceeded their wildest dreams; they had inadvertantly opened Pandora's box and the resultant public clamoring for additional traffic service became a formidable responsibility. The desperate need for two-way traffic made the owners acutely aware how totally inadequate the narrow bridges and the thread-like cut through the ledges actually had become...the only feasible solution would be a completely new and wider cut through the ledges on the west side of the Westfield River, at a completely new location. This was designed to accommodate three sets of tracks. When completed, the three western-most bridges and more than three miles of the old roadbed were abandoned. The three arched, stone bridges still stand...in mute evidence of one of the many weaknesses of mortal man-failure to anticipate and provide for future developments."

* * *

When we printed the article by May Smith about the little tin horns and other things she found when renovating an old house, we did not have the space to print the drawing which shows exactly how the old inkwell looks. This inkwell was seven feet deep in the ground, if you remember. Tom Jay made this sketch of it for us: (Little Tin Horns, p. 28, Summer 1979).



* * *

21 August 1979

Dear Editor,

In Volume 5 number 2 on page 12 the name Stanley Clark caught my eye since I have been doing some genealogical work on the Clark family of Montgomery. I do believe it should read Schuyler Clark rather than Stanley. Schuyler was born 15 August 1841 in Coeymans, N.Y., son of Reuben Clark of Montgomery, Mass. and Catherine Green. He married Frances L. Woods and became a lawyer in Huntington. He died 7 December 1896 from exposure to water in cold weather. A few days later the *Springfield Daily Republican* had an excellent article on his life.

Schuyler was a descendent of Oliver Clark, one of the first settlers of Montgomery. His lineage is as follows:
Schuyler(8) Reuben(7) Holly(6) James(5)

Oliver(4) Isaac(3) John(2) Thomas(1) Schuyler, his wife, and parents are buried in the Norwich Bridge cemetery in Huntington.

> Sincerely yours, Francis O'Leary 178 Walnut Street Agawam, Ma. 01001

The Summer 1979 issue had just gone to press when Bernard Drew discovered an article about Windsor roads which would have gone nicely with his article. Here are a few remarks from an article in the October 16, 1919 issue of The Berkshire Courier: "Early on the morning of Columbus day the writer made a trip to Windsor for the purpose of ascertaining the condition of the (new) state road... Back 60 to 100 years ago this big round mountain was fairly thickly settled and the cellar holes here and there, the numerous stone walls, and the old paper mill at West Cummington still tell the story of the early farmers and the decline of the mountain towns.

"Ascending from Dalton there is a long climb, with only one stretch that is heavy grade. The road is wide, the curves wider than the rest of the road, and these curves are banked finely... We took another road in the machine to the east end of the section under construction, and while there made a run to East Windsor and beyond over the old macadam that was built some years ago. This is fairly good but narrow..." The writer goes on to describe his jaunt through West Cummington, and an unfortunate confrontation with a farm wagon.

DEATH OF SCHUYLER CLARK.

A SAD AFFAIR AT HUNTINGTON.

Prominent Citizen of the Hampshire Town Broke Through the Ice at Norwich Pond and Died From Exposure— His Active and Useful Life.

The town of Huntington lost its leading citizen Monday night under exceeding'y distressing circumstances. Schuyler Clark died at his cottage on the shore of Norwich pond, the picturesque little sheet of water about seven miles from the village, from the effects of severe exposure, heaving stayed in the key cold water of the pond over three-quarters of an hour after breaking through the key whence he had gene to look after some "tips" set to catch fish. He was researd from his perform position of holding and the leave of the receivable with rise but in water promatny 10 feet deep and taken to his cottage.

Frank S. Nooney sent us this "follow-up" of the story about the visit of the convict to the Alderman farm.

Perhaps I am again living in the past, but when I read in "Stone Walls" Cecil Alderman's story about the peculiar chap, thought to be an escaped convict, who visited his farm home some years ago, I was strongly reminded of the time, shortly after the turn of the century, when a murderer, fleeing from his pursuers, passed through our neighborhood. I am not sure of the year but it would have had to be in either 1903, -04 or -05. I doubt this incident or the tragedy connected with it has crossed my mind in 60 or 70 years, but the fact I remember it at all is convincing evidence that it made a lasting impression on a small boy at the time.

Our farm home was located some one and one-half or two miles south of Chester Center on what was then known as Cook Brook Road which, I understand, is now a part of the Skyline Trail. If I remember my local geography correctly this must have been just a few miles from the locale of Mr. Alderman's narrative. There were no telephones on our road then and news traveled slowly. We first became aware that a criminal was at large nearby when armed men drove up with horse and buggy and asked if a strange man had been seen around there that day. When answered in the negative they told us they were seeking a man named William Tiedman who had shot and killed his wife in or near Chester Village earlier that day. They said he was probably carrying the revolver with which he had committed the crime. They also told us that Tiedman had escaped on foot but had been trailed up over Chester Hill, down by Chester Center and

to the farm of our neighbor, Irving Allen, who lived some one-half or three quarters of a mile closer to Chester Center. Mr. Allen told them he had talked briefly to a strange man who was passing his place on foot earlier. Apparently Tiedman either passed our place on the road unseen or made his way through adjacent fields and pasture where there would have been ample cover to conceal his passage. I do not recall that we took any special precautions or had any plan for coping with the situation if he should put in an appearance but it is reasonable to suppose that we were somewhat uneasy and probably more alert for strangers than usual.

Later, I believe next day, we heard that Tiedman had been captured the previous evening near the foot of Cook Hill, where Cook Brook Road joined the old Huntington - Chester river road, by men watching there for him. He was later tried and convicted for the murder of his wife and sentenced, I believe, to life imprisonment. I do not know how long he was required to serve.

The murder, manhunt and capture were, of course, fully reported in the local and Springfield papers and I remember the Chester Chronicle devoted the whole front page to the story. Included with the story were several clever cartoons, one of which I can still see in my mind's eye. It purported to depict our excitable and rather garrulous neighbor, Mr. Allen, holding a shotgun and telling what he would have done to the hapless miscreant had he then known of his crime and desperate situation.

In the issue of Stone Walls which came out in Spring of 1977 (a sugarhouse on the cover — Vol. 3 No. 1) we published an excerpt of Electa Miller Gardner's diary. Electa Miller Gardner lived all of her life in Knightville between 1813 and 1890. Anne Gardner, who lives in Hendersonvill, N.C. and who husband is Electa Gardner's great grandson, has in her possession a friendship quilt which belonged to Electa Miller Gardner. She reports that the names on each square are still discernable and that the colors on the wool-filled quilt are still quite bright.

Below is the list of names, and sometimes dates, written in now-faded ink.

Eugene S. Miller, aged 2 years

A.S. Ormsby, Chester, Mass.

Martha F. Merritt

Ruth N. Ormsby, Chester, Mass.

Mary C. Fisk

Sylvia Bates Died Dec. 27, aged 75, 1847 Who can suppress the rising fear

When called to part with those we love

Yet may this thought our spirit hear We part on earth to meet above.

Wealthy M. Taylor, Worthington, Mass.

Relief Fisk

Philena Strong

Harriet Gardner

Mary L. Remington, Holyoke, Mass.

Clarissa H. Merritt

Aliva R. Miller

Mary H. Tinker

This may remind you of - When the hand that wrote it is stilled forever.

Lydia P. Miller

Laura Vinton

Maria E. Tildon, Chesterfield, Mass.

Mary I. Ormsby, Chester, Mass.

Laura P. Rude, died Dec. 27, 1849, aged 23 days

Mrs. Jermina Strong, Died July 28, 1849, aged 68 years

Harriet E. Vecky

Electa M. Gardner

Sarah H. Elliott, Thompson, Conn.

Margette P. White

Margaret A. Jackson, Worthington, Mass.

Maria S. Nash, Plainfield, Mass.

Ella M. Tilden, aged 2 years.

Margaret E. Remington, Holyoke, Mass.

S. C. Elliott, Thompson, Conn.

Electa Rude

Martha Sampson, Chester, Mass.

Lois E. Weeks

Mary E. Merritt

Sarah Amelia White, Died July 19, 1848, aged 2 years

Ere sin could blight or sorrow fade God's angel came with friendly care

This fairest flower to Heaven conveyed

And bade it bloom forever there.

Maria E. Minor, Chicopee, Mass.

Emily Angell

Mrs. L. M. Wyles

Eunice B. Miller

Sarah H. Gardner

Mary Sampson, Chester, Mass.

Wealthy Rude

Mrs. Nancy Taylor, Worthington, Mass.

Clara D. Hargis, New Haven, Conn.

Mrs. Betsy Gardner Died Nov. 29, 1850, aged 57 years.

Mrs. E. Remington, Holyoke, Mass. Sarah G. R. Remington, Holyoke, Mass.



Next time you clean the attic see if your ancestors left something for Stone Walb-diaries, pictures, letters about these Hill Towns.



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"Look how the years have made brown lace of interwoven ivy branches on the stone wall's face."

> YEARS by Dionis Coffin Riggs

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